

Remarks

The Applicants have amended Claim 1 to recite that the linear elements have a fibrillar or rod shape. Support may be found in the Applicants' specification such as on page 18 in lines 18 – 19. Claim 1 has also been amended to remove reference to the polyphenylene sulfide and to recite that the content of the liquid-crystalline polyester in the laminated film is 5 to 25% by weight. Support may be found in the Applicants' specification on page 28, lines 8 – 11, for example.

Claim 8 has been cancelled.

Claim 28 has been amended to include clarifying roman number indicators for various of the steps in that claim.

Claim 40 has been added. That claim recites that step (II) of Claim 28 comprises a step (II-a) and a step (II-b). Support may be found in the Applicants' specification such as on page 40, lines 6 – 16 and page 45, lines 11 – 17, for example.

Entry of the above amendments to Claims 1 and 28, cancellation of Claim 8 and addition of new Claim 40 into the official file is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 2, 6, 8, 10 – 14, 33, 34 and 37 stand rejected under 35 USC §112 as being indefinite. The Applicants note with appreciation the Examiner's helpful comments with respect to the linear element and the liquid versus non-liquid crystal polyester. The Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection is now moot with respect to cancelled Claim 8. The Applicants also respectfully submit that the rejection is now inapplicable inasmuch as the Applicants have specified the nature of the linear elements as being fibrillar or rod shaped and reference to the "non" liquid-crystalline polyester has been removed. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 2, 8, 10 - 14, 28 and 29 stand rejected under 35 USC §103 over the hypothetical combination of Perez with Hibiya. The Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection is now moot with respect to cancelled Claim 8. The Applicants also note with appreciation the Examiner's detailed comments hypothetically applying the combination against those claims. The Applicants respectfully submit, however, that the hypothetical combination fails to disclose, teach or suggest the subject matter of those claims. Several distinct reasons are set forth below.

Hibiya discloses liquid-crystalline polyester as an immiscible polymer. However, Hibiya also discloses many other polymers as immiscible polymers. Hibiya also does not disclose using liquid-crystalline polyester to form a network structure-including film layer. Therefore, it is anything but obvious that one skilled in the art would select liquid-crystalline polyester from many immiscible polymers to form the Applicants' claimed network structure-including film layer on the basis of Hibiya.

Perez discloses films having a fibrillated surface and a method of making those films. Perez also discloses many polymers as immiscible polymers. However, Perez does not disclose using liquid-crystalline polyester. Therefore, it is anything but obvious that one skilled in the art would select liquid-crystalline polyester from many immiscible polymers to form the Applicants' claimed network structure-including film layer on the basis of Perez.

Given that it would not be obvious to one skilled in the art to select liquid-crystalline polyester from the many immiscible polymers to form the Applicants' claimed network structure-including film layer in both of Hibiya and Perez, it inherently follows that it would not be obvious to combine the two disclosures. It inherently follows that there would no reasonable

expectation of success upon making such a hypothetical combination. The Applicants respectfully submit that the combination is inapplicable on that basis alone.

However, the Applicants discovered something unexpected in their utilization of liquid-crystalline polyester to form the Applicants' claimed network structure-including film layer. They discovered that it is important to employ 5 to 25% of the liquid-crystalline polyester in the laminated film. This is illustrated by reference to the Applicants' Examples in their specification with a focus on Example 8. That Example employs 3% of liquid-crystalline polyester and has a flatness of "C." This is different from the flatnesses achieved when the percentage of liquid-crystalline polyester is within the claimed range of 5 – 25% wherein those flatnesses are classified as "A" or "B."

Neither of Hibiya or Perez disclose controlling the content of liquid-crystalline polyester in a range of 5 – 25% in the laminated film to improve the flatness of the film. Thus, the Applicants respectfully submit that they achieved something that is quite unexpected over any hypothetical combination of Perez with Hibiya. Withdrawal of the rejection is accordingly respectfully requested.

Claims 30 – 32 stand rejected under 35 USC §103 over the further hypothetical combination of Nakatani with Perez and Hibiya. The Applicants respectfully submit that Nakatani fails to provide additional disclosure, teachings or suggestions that would cure the deficiencies set forth above with respect to the hypothetical combination of Perez with Hibiya. Withdrawal of that rejection is also respectfully requested.

Claims 6 and 33 – 39 stand rejected under 35 USC §103 over the further hypothetical combination of Nakamura with Perez and Hibiya. The Applicants respectfully submit that Nakamura fails to provide additional disclosure, teachings or suggestions that would cure the

deficiencies set forth above with respect to the hypothetical combination of Perez with Hibiya.

Withdrawal of that rejection is also respectfully requested.

In light of the foregoing, the Applicants respectfully submit that the entire application is now in condition for allowance, which is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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